

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1           1.     A topical composition comprising:  
2           at least about 5.0% (w/v) pretreated ascorbic acid; and  
3           water,  
4           wherein the composition has a pH of more than 3.5.
- 1           2.     The composition of claim 1, wherein the composition has a pH of about  
2     3.6 to about 4.2.
- 1           3.     The composition of claim 2, wherein the composition has a pH of about  
2     3.7 to about 4.0.
- 1           4.     The composition of claim 1, further comprising an anti-inflammatory  
2     compound.
- 1           5.     The composition of claim 4, wherein the anti-inflammatory compound  
2     includes sulfur-containing anti-inflammatory compound.
- 1           6.     The composition of claim 5, wherein the sulfur-containing anti-  
2     inflammatory compound is selected from the group consisting of cystine, cysteine, N-  
3     acetyl cysteine, glutathione, cysteamine, S-methylcysteine, methionine and mixtures  
4     thereof.
- 1           7.     The composition of claim 4, wherein the anti-inflammatory compound  
2     includes aminosugar.
- 1           8.     The composition of claim 7, wherein the aminosugar includes  
2     glucosamine, mannosamine, N-acetylmannosamine, galactosamine, glucosamine-6-  
3     phosphate, N-acetylglucosamine, N-acetylmannosamine, N-acetylgalactosamine and  
4     mixtures thereof.
- 1           9.     The composition of claim 1, comprising about 15% (w/v) to about 25%  
2     (w/v) pretreated ascorbic acid.

1           10.    The composition of claim 1, wherein the water is selected from the group  
2 consisting of distilled water, deionized water, distilled deionized water and mixtures  
3 thereof.

1           11.    The composition of claim 1, further comprising about 0.5 to about 5%  
2 (w/v) of a non-toxic zinc salt.

1           12.    The composition of claim 11, wherein the non-toxic zinc salt is zinc  
2 sulfate.

1           13.    The composition of claim 1, further comprising a tyrosine compound  
2 selected from the group consisting of tyrosine, N-acetyl-tyrosine, tyrosine ethyl ester  
3 hydrochloride, tyrosine phosphate and mixtures thereof.

1           14.    The composition of claim 13, comprising about 1 to about 10% (w/v) of  
2 the tyrosine compound.

1           15.    The composition of claim 1, further comprising a pharmaceutically  
2 acceptable carrier.

1           16.    The composition of claim 15, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable  
2 carrier includes glycerol, propyleneglycol, sorbitol, hydroxypropylcellulose or a mixture  
3 thereof.

1           17.    The composition of claim 15, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable  
2 carrier includes alkyleneglycol, hydroxyalkylcellulose or a mixture thereof.

1           18.    A topical composition comprising:  
2 an aqueous solution including at least about 5.0% (w/v) ascorbic acid,  
3 wherein about 10 to about 50% of the ascorbic acid is pretreated ascorbic acid.

1           19.    The composition of claim 18, wherein the aqueous solution has a pH of  
2 more than about 3.5.

1           20.    The composition of claim 18, further comprising a non-toxic zinc salt.

- 1           21.    The composition of claim 18, further comprising a stimulant of protein  
2 synthesis.
- 1           22.    The composition of claim 21, wherein the stimulant of protein synthesis is  
2 a tyrosine compound.
- 1           23.    The composition of claim 18, further comprising a precursor of melanin  
2 synthesis.
- 1           24.    The composition of claim 18, comprising about 15 to about 25% (w/v)  
2 ascorbic acid.
- 1           25.    The composition of claim 18, wherein the topical composition is an  
2 aqueous solution, a serum, a lotion, an ointment, a cream, or a gel.
- 1           26.    A topical composition comprising:  
2           an aqueous solution including at least about 5.0% (w/v) ascorbic acid, wherein  
3 about 10 to about 50% of the ascorbic acid is pretreated ascorbic acid;  
4           a non-toxic zinc salt; and  
5           a tyrosine compound,  
6           wherein the composition has a pH of more than 3.5.